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* Summer Camps

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USA Women Improve to 3-0 at Grand Prix

USA defeats Netherlands in three on Wednesday (full details to come later)

GIOIA DEL COLLE, Italy (July 22, 2003) – Keba Phipps scored a match-high 21 points to lead five players in double figures as the U.S. women's national volleyball team edged Japan, 3-2, to improve to 2-0 at the 2003 FIVB World Grand Prix Tuesday afternoon at the Palazzo dello Sport. On Wednesday, the USA defeated Netherlands 25-23, 25-20, 25-15 to win its third straight match heading into the off day. Danielle Scott poured down 14 points to lead the USA against Netherlands, followed by 12 points each from Logan Tom and Nancy Metcalf.



Against Japan, Phipps (Las Vegas, Nev.) had 17 kills, three service aces and one block in the 24-26, 25-17, 25-15, 23-25, 15-12 victory in Pool A.

"This was not a pretty match," said Team USA Head Coach Toshi Yoshida. "It was almost a nightmare, although the statistics say we won."

Nancy Metcalf added 19 points, Elisha Thomas posted 15, Logan Tom had 14 and Danielle Scott chipped in with 11 as Team USA won its seventh match in a row to improve to 11-6 on the season.

Metcalf (Hull, Iowa) had 14 kills, four blocks and one ace, while Thomas (Grass Valley, Calif.) registered eight kills, a match-high four aces and three blocks. Tom (Salt Lake City, Utah) added 11 kills and three blocks in the victory.

"The Japanese side played very good defense today," said Scott (Baton Rouge, La.), who had five kills, three blocks and three aces. "This proves that there will be no easy matches at this championship. All the teams are very good."

As a team, the United States out-blocked Japan, 15-8, and blasted 12 aces to Japan's four.

"This victory was very important for us because it was the first time this year we have been able to pull together and win a five-game match," said right-side hitter Tayyiba Haneef (Laguna Hills, Calif.), who scored one point off the bench as she continues to recover from a sprained ankle.

Megumi Kurihara scored a team-high 17 points on 16 kills and one ace to lead Japan, which fell to 0-2 in pool play. Sachiko Sugiyama scored 14 points on 12 kills, one block and one ace, while Miyuki Takahashi added 11 points on nine kills, one block and one ace.

In other Pool A action, Germany (1-1) handed Cuba its second-straight loss, 3-1, while the Netherlands (2-0) upset defending world champion Italy (1-1) in five sets. In Pool B, Russia (1-1) defeated Thailand (0-2), Brazil (2-0) beat Canada (0-2) and China (2-0) shut down Korea (1-1), all by 3-0 scores.

FIVB World Grand Prix

Standings

Pool A

USA (2-0)
 Netherlands (2-0)
 Italy (1-1)
 Germany (1-1)
 Japan (0-2)
 Cuba (0-2)

Pool B

Brazil (2-0)
 China (2-0)
 Russia (1-1)
 Korea (1-1)
 Canada (0-2)
 Thailand (0-2)

Tuesday's Results

Pool A

USA def. Japan, 3-2 (24-26, 25-17, 25-15, 23-25, 15-12)
 Germany def. Cuba, 3-1 (25-16, 25-14, 22-25, 25-16)
 Netherlands def. Italy, 3-2 (16-25, 25-20, 27-25, 15-25, 15-8)

Pool B

Russia def. Thailand, 3-0 (25-18, 25-21, 25-19)
 Brazil def. Canada, 3-0 (25-23, 25-18, 25-20)
 China def. Korea, 3-0 (29-27, 25-8, 25-23)

Wednesday's Schedule

Pool A

Netherlands vs. USA
 Germany vs. Japan
 Cuba vs. Italy

Pool B

Canada vs. Korea
 Brazil vs. Russia
 China vs. Thailand

(Story and photo of Keba Phipps courtesy of USA Volleyball.)

USA Women Open World Grand Prix with Sweep of Cuba

GIOIA DEL COLLE, Italy (July 21, 2003) – Team captain Danielle Scott scored a match-high 11 points to lead four players in double figures as the U.S. women's national volleyball team swept Cuba to begin the 2003 FIVB World Grand Prix Monday night at the Palazzo dello Sport.



Scott (Baton Rouge, La.), the Most Valuable Player of this tournament in 2001 when the United States won the gold medal, had seven kills and a match-high four blocks in the 25-22, 25-19, 25-14 victory in Pool A.

Keba Phipps, Elisha Thomas and Logan Tom added 10 points apiece as Team USA won its sixth match in a row to improve to 10-6 on the season.

Phipps (Las Vegas, Nev.), playing in her first match of the year, blasted 10 kills and added a team-high nine digs. Thomas (Grass Valley, Calif.), starting in place of an injured Heather Bown (Yorba Linda, Calif.), had five kills, three blocks and two service aces. Tom (Salt Lake City, Utah), the team's top scorer in 11 of 16 matches on the year, had eight kills, one block, one ace and seven digs.



“Tonight was a really physical game, like Cuba always is,” said opposite Nancy Metcalf, who scored seven points on five kills and two blocks. “Our goal was to take care of our side and stay focused. We knew if we took care of the ball and stayed under control, we could beat Cuba. A 3-0 win feels good and now we are looking forward to the match with Japan tomorrow.”

Tayyiba Haneef (Laguna Hills, Calif.), playing in her first match since spraining her ankle on June 12, scored five points on five kills off the bench. Libero Stacy Sykora (Burlington, Texas) registered eight digs.

“Tonight gave us confidence that we will be able to build on throughout the tournament,” said setter Lindsey Berg (Honolulu, Hawaii), who scored two points. “We came out a little dead and out of rhythm, but we were patient and by the end of the first game, we were taking care of business on our side. We did a lot of good things tonight and we hope to get stronger and stronger each match.”

As a team, the United States out-blocked Cuba, 11-2, and posted a hitting percentage of .529 (42-5-70). Cuba hit .222. Next up for the Americans in Pool A is a match against Japan on Tuesday.

Yumilka Ruiz and Kenia Carcase scored eight points apiece to lead Cuba, which has lost its last four matches against the United States.

In other Pool A action, the Netherlands swept Japan and Italy defeated Germany, 3-1. In Pool B, Brazil and China posted sweeps of Thailand and Canada, respectively, while Korea upset defending Grand Prix champion Russia, 3-1.

(Story and photo of Danielle Scott courtesy of USA Volleyball.)

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